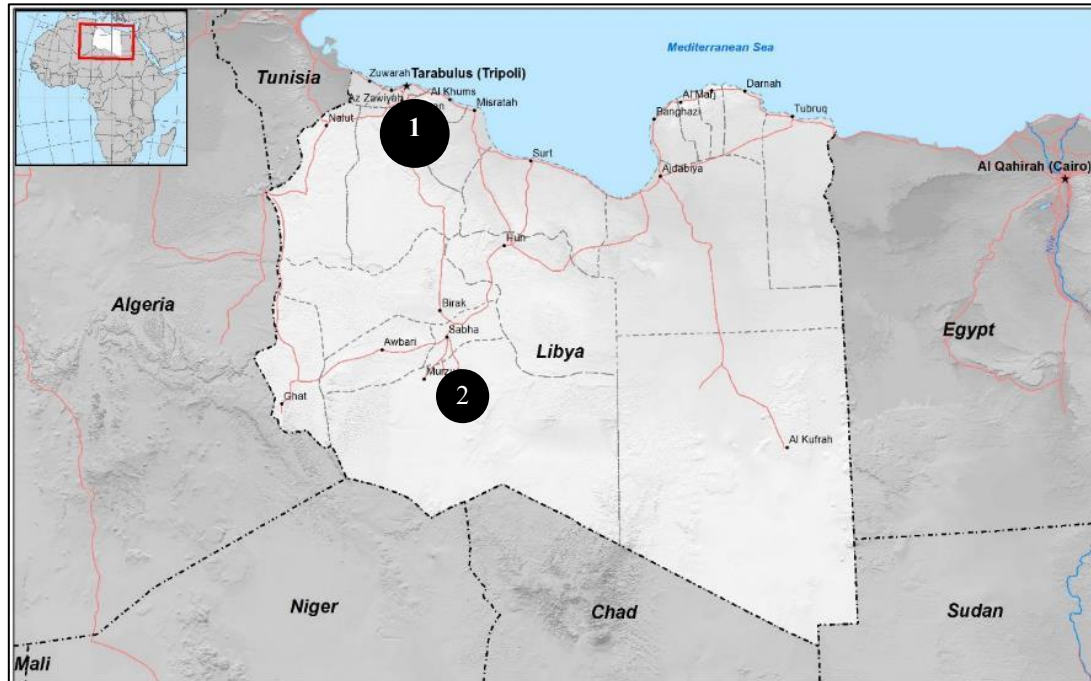


EU LIAISON AND PLANNING CELL LIBYA

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SUMMARY

The last few weeks have been a period of mounting tension. However, the term of the 22 June did not outburst as there were glimmers of hope that the situation may not escalate because of renewed political initiatives. Militias remain relatively calm, reassessing their role and alliances, but sparks were constantly created with the risk to reignite the fire in a more unstable social and economic environment.

Military forces have mostly concentrated allegedly in security operations against criminal activities and illegal smuggling along the country, highlighting third parties resurgent interests, such as the option from the Fezzan province to become more politically and militarily independent.

The protracting of the instability, together with the arising of the economic crisis and power cuts may foster the tension among the citizens and leave more room for a new disputable mechanism to safeguard the oil production and share the revenues. That, in a new season of declared *Force Majeures*, pending the dispute for a unified Libyan government and the contested nomination of the UN SRSG.

1. SITUATION IN THE GTA

GNU and GNS maintained their own layout of forces, consolidating their security alliances and positions. No relevant event has indicated an increase in hostilities between the forces supporting the GNU or the GNS. The security tension in GTA was minimal in comparison with the previous period and do not appear politically driven because the pending of political initiatives. A part the deprecatory human security, public demonstrations indicate a wider generalized discontent with reference to the economy crisis.

Among the most significant related events:

- on 23 June, Tajoura militias and the SDF force increased tension following the SDF's release of al-Daman force commander Ali Dreider. Members of the militias based in Tajoura erected barricades and mobilized armed forces near Tajoura. Tajoura militias asked for Ali Dreider to be returned to prison. The GNU PM Dbiebah went in person trying to mediate between the militias;

Comment

On September 2020, al-Daman militia commander Ali Dreider attacked positions of Al-Bugra militia that prompted former GNA Defence Minister Salaheddin Al-Namroush to order his arrest. Dreider handed himself over to the SDF.

Assessment

It is unlikely that this event has been politically driven considering that Al Daman Militia is under the SSA umbrella and Tajoura militias support the GNU. This event indicate that tensions are consistently arising and can escalate anytime, anywhere in limited skirmishes.

- on the same day, skirmishes erupted between militias in Al-Ajaylat's Al-Shabika area, due to the arrest of a militiaman's relative;
- on the same day, the 444th Bde raided six locations in Bani Walid in the context of a counter anti organized crime operation mainly oriented to oil smuggling and there are several reports of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) flying over contested areas;
- on 26 June, in an open letter published by the Tripoli Protection Force (TPF), GNU commander Mohamed Bahrin aka "Al-Far" warned GNU PM not to use the anti-GNS coalition's rejection of Bashagha to prolong his own mandate. Bahrin is supporting the GNU's posture in Al-Zawiya and Tripoli's western flank against the growing of the GNS influence;
- on the same day, the GNU MoD Military Prosecutor, Massoud Rhouma, required former Military Intelligence Chief Osama Juwaili (Zintan), to present himself to the GNU Military Prosecutor's office in Al-Furnaj as part of ongoing investigations about a case;
- on 27 June, localized sources informed about a meeting with GNU Army COS LTG Muhammad Al-Haddad and the 444th Commander Mahmoud Hamza. Haddad praised the role of the 444th in combating smuggling, organized crime, imposing security and resolving clashes in order to support its role in enforcing the State power and the rule of laws;
- on the 29 June the SSA, the Elections and Constitution Support Force (ECSF), the Joint Operations Force Misrata, Battalion 301 and the General Security Agency (GSA) participated the armed parade in support of the GNU in Martyrs Square. Sources report that the GSA agreed to participate, after receiving a 10 million LYD allocation from Abdul Hamid Dbeiba. The SSA and the SDF clashed in the central Dahmani area of Tripoli after an SDF checkpoint stopped an Apparatus convoy in the Nouflien area. A Force gunman, two SSA elements and a civilian were reported killed.

2. SECURITY ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE OF THE GTA

Between the most significant events, tensions can be reported into the Fezzan province:

- on 23 June, local sources informed that the LNA 155th Bn based in Tamanhint, deployed mobile patrols on the Murzuq basin as part of the efforts to secure the region;
- on 24 June, localized sources informed of tensions after the seizure of the General Services Company Benghazi Branch HQ by suspected Benghazi Joint Security Chamber, allegedly under the orders of GNS Deputy Prime Minister Qatrani;
- on the same day, Director of the LNA's Moral Guidance Department Khaled Al-Mahjoub announced that the LNA was secured Murzuq. He also announced that the internally displaced persons (IDPs) from this town could return to their own city after three years of displacement. However, local sources indicated that the decision was not welcomed by the majority of locals because of the possible increase of the instability security situation;
- on the same day, local sources informed about the obstruction of the second round of the Fezzan Forum. The Libyan National Army (LNA) allegedly carried out the blockade into the location.

Comment

On 07 June, LNA deployed reinforcements to the Fezzan Region in support of the Southern Operations Room.

The Fezzan Forum topics of discussion include the need for holding elections and at the same time rejecting the marginalisation of Fezzan, stating the importance of distancing from the Tripoli -Cyrenaica confrontation.

Assessment

The level of administrative autonomy the Forum seeks to achieve could undermine the LNA's authority in the region. The LNA dispatched reinforcements from Cyrenaica towards western Fezzan and the increased LNA presence in the area could create potential tension with local actors in the short term. Between them, the Libyan National Army (LNA) 110th Battalion of the 12th Brigade which operates in the wider Fezzan Region, the LNA 155th Infantry Battalion Al-Jufra Company, which was recently reinforced with tanks and artillery which operates in the Eastern Fezzan and the LNA Tariq Bin Ziyad (TBZ) Al-Muzzaz Al-Janoub Brigade which operates in the Sebha area.

3. OTHER INTERNATIONAL AND SECURITY RELATED EVENTS

The International Community is maintaining its commitment to the stability of the country by supporting a consensual political and financial solution that would enable the consensus among all the parties for an agreed roadmap that will lead the country to the elections and distribute evenly needed resources.

Following, some of the main significant events:

- on 23 June, UN-Secretary General (UNSG) Antonio Guterres informed UN Security Council (UNSC) members of the intention to nomination the former Algerian Foreign Minister Sabri Boukadoum to head the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). United Arab Emirates is confronting the nomination and the SC is at the moment trying to de-conflict the situation;
- on 24 June, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America States issued a joint statement stressing that the UN-endorsed Libyan Political Dialogue Forum (LPDF) roadmap set only the expiration of the transitional phase . They stressed the need for a unified Libyan government and the "full implementation of the 23 October 2020 ceasefire agreement", rejecting actions that could lead to violence or to greater divisions in Libya, including the formation of parallel institutions and to any attempt to seize power through force. They also stressed the urgency to establish a joint revenue management mechanism;

- on June 27, local sources informed of the formation of a Joint Committee between Government of National Stability (GNS) and the Egyptian Government to resolve the problem of Amsaed Border Crossing and facilitate cross-border movement. There are currently several problems regarding borders crossing in the Western, Southern and Eastern Regions;

Assessment

GNS will likely continue addressing every issue concerning organized crime, smuggling and border control because it can provide more legitimacy, apart indirect economic benefits linked with borders control and crossing.

- on the same day, as reported, Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) has been informed that the leadership of Turkish forces in Libya has informed the mercenaries of "National Army" factions of the cessation of back-and-forth transfer operations until the end of 2022 without explaining the reasons.
- on the same day, National Oil Corporation stated that it was on the verge of declaring force majeure on oil exports from its key eastern oil terminals unless production and shipping were resumed at the oil ports in the Gulf of Sirte. The protestors that were leading the oil blockades have been calling for the removal of the Tripoli-based GNU and a restoration of the political process;
- on June 29, the Oil Corporation declared force majeure in the ports of Es Sider and Ras Lanuf.

Comment

The Gulf of Sirte includes four main oil export terminals with a total capacity of 630,000 b/d – Es Sider (250,000 b/d), Ras Lanuf (200,000 b/d), Brega (90,000 b/d) and Zueitina (90,000 b/d). Half of Libya's oil production is now offline. Oil exports from the Es Sider and Marsa el-Hariga terminals and production from the 200,000 b/d Sarir field have already been severely disrupted in the past few weeks due to a series of blockades. The Libyan National Army (LNA), which supports the East-based Government of National Stability, has backed the population protests. LNA controls most of Libya's oil and gas infrastructure but does not control the sales and distribution of revenue.

Besides that, Libyans face a dozen hours of power cuts a day, during summer time temperatures. The National Electricity Company (Gecol) lamented a "loss of about 1,000 megawatts" due to a disruption in gas supply caused by the blockades.

Assessment

It is likely that oil's weaponization will continue to be exploited by Eastern forces in order to get revenues and possibly consolidate their aspirations. Mobilizing the population against the GNU, as an effect, will likely increase tension and will lead the environment to ignite furthermore.

Sign-off for release: Brig. Gen. STELLA, V.

Disclaimer: This report is based on security events and reports from multiple open sources, whose accuracy may not always be verified. Therefore, the information and conclusions expressed are subject to change without notice.